



FRANK

Des Moines
CATHOLIC WORKER
via pacis
volume 1 no. 10
September, 1977

Dear Jesus,...

(The artwork on the cover was done by Bobby. Bobby and his mother are familiar and well-loved members of our extended community. Bobby is 7 and is crazy about Bishop Dingman. He has no scruples--as most of us would--about curling up in the Bishop's lap, which he did the night the Bishop spoke at the Worker on "prisons". During the mass, prison became a very real experience for the community, as one of our own--Frank Cordaro--serves a 30-day sentence for a protest at the Pentagon. It especially became real for Bobby. He has a very deep mind for a 7-year old. And a very good understanding of the life of Jesus. He was very disturbed about "Uncle Frank" being in a prison. He asked his mother a lot of questions and she tried to explain--and Bobby understood--as best a 7-year old can; but Bobby still didn't like the idea much. So he asked to dictate to his "Mummy" a petition to Jesus, which she has shared with us here--in unretouched 7-year old Indian wisdom. . .)

Jesus,
This is Bobby, you know very well who I am, my last name is Palayam. I'm sending you a petition on behalf of my Uncle Frank. Please keep all other urgent letters aside and read my letter fast and find a solution for it. You know my Uncle Frank, he is in jail. I do not know the exact reason. My Mummy tells me all about my Uncle Frank fight for justice and I do not really understand what does that meant. Anyway, I know he is in jail for some good reason. My Uncle Frank is a good guy. He does give

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Fall Discussions

Part of the Catholic Worker tradition is the round table discussion where people join together to verbalize and clarify thoughts. The liturgy is celebrated every Friday at the house located at 713 Indiana, one block north of University at 8 p.m., followed by a discussion on these topics:

September 9--- Human Rights Violations in Chile. A film entitled "To the People of the World"

September 16--- Gay Catholicism with "Bucky" from the Community for Creative Non-violence of Washington D.C.

September 23--- Personal Action Against An Unjust System with Frank Cordaro

September 30--- Human Rights in South Africa. A film entitled "Last Grave At Dim Baza"

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We occupied Msgr. Ligutti House of Hospitality around August first, nearly two months later than scheduled. At the time, almost everyone questioned the wisdom of purchasing a home in such dire need of repair. Now, one month later, we are very close to opening the house for hospitality. We await only the completion of the second floor bathroom and Frank's return to start accepting guests there.

Thank you to everyone who helped with rehabilitation efforts: the painting, plastering, plumbing, electrical rewiring and carpentry. A special note of gratitude goes to the men of Knights of Columbus Council # 5389 for their donation of materials and services in roofing the house and the porches. This was a two week-end project for 25 men. MUCHAS GRACIAS.

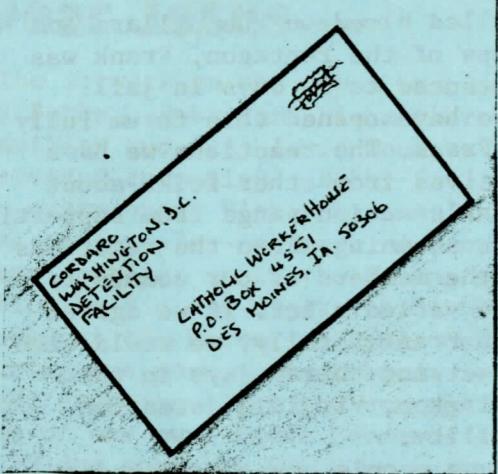
This issue is largely comprised of Frank's writings over the past month. In our last issue, we mentioned that he would be going to a non-violence training seminar in Baltimore and Washington D.C. As a result of the seminar, Frank, Lee Miller and Tom Nietfield (who may be familiar to some readers of this letter) and 17 others were arrested for acts of civil disobedience at the Pentagon. Frank, Lee, Tom and two others

spilled blood on the pillars and steps of the Pentagon. Frank was sentenced to 30 days in jail.

We have opened this forum fully to Frank. The reactions we have received from other folks about Frank's action range from supportive to condemning. Even the reactions of the members of our community have varied a lot. If we agreed with Frank totally, we would also be serving thirty days in the Arlington, Virginia detention facility.

Many people have been arrested before for political actions, some less, some more notorious than Frank's. But the uniqueness of this situation makes it different and much more important to the Catholic Community of Des Moines. The man who was arrested was from Des Moines, a product of 12 years of Catholic education, ending in a Masters in Divinity from Aquinas Institute in Dubuque. Had Frank concluded his seminary training in the usual way, he would now be waiting assignment as an ordained priest. Instead, he decided a year ago to pursue, for the time being, a lay ministry as founder and member of the Catholic Worker Community in Des Moines. Frank is not one of the people "out there." He is the son of George and Angela. He is the friend next door for many people here in Des Moines. His arrest is more important to local people, especially Catholics, for all these reasons. Therefore, we hope you will read Frank's story and comment on it. We will be glad to publish your comments in our next issue.

--Joe Da Via



Folks,

Prisoner 188-545, Frank Cardaro or Cordaro, writing home with some general information. Since Thursday afternoon (August 11) I have been in Dead Lock (single cell) in Washington, D.C. Jail--New Section. It is possible that I will be in Dead Lock (never out of the cell except for showers) until our arraignment and possible trial on August 19.

To tell you the truth, I am quite comfortable. The cell is airconditioned! It has a light which I can control myself, a nice firm bunk, a stool, a sink, and a small desk. At this point, I really welcome the solitude. However, one never knows whether or not paper will be given for writing, and they have threatened us with no books except what we have with us. I have only one, Peace Making, and I'm reading it slowly --after that, it could be a long haul. Meals are the college dorm type and they are brought to our cells.

We have been put in Dead Lock

(as opposed to being members of the general prison population) because we refused to take blood tests and X-rays. Nine of our group are here at the D.C. jail. Five other men are at the Arlington jail, together with two women who were also arrested.

This jail is a new facility--very modern! About 99% of the prison population is Black. The old D.C. jail was a very dangerous place--



rape and other kinds of physical violence being very common. I do not know enough about this place yet to comment on the difference. It could be a blessing that we refused the blood tests and X-rays--the hell you know is better than the unknown one ahead.

The Action

There is so much to tell you! I'll begin with the action itself--it stands out most in my mind right now. There were between fifty and one hundred people outside the Pentagon. Throughout the morning, we passed out leaflets to Pentagon workers reminding them of the anniversary of the dropping of the Bomb on Nagasaki.

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At about 11:00, the hour that the Bomb was dropped thirty-two years ago, we gathered in front of the main entrance for a symbolic Rite of Exorcism (used to articulate what the Pentagon really is--EVIL, man-made, but evil nevertheless--and our desire to call on God to help us rid ourselves of its control of our lives). At this time, five people who had been standing at the central pillars holding signs with large



letters which spelled out DEATH were replaced by blood-spillers (I was a blood-spiller). After the Rite or Exorcism, twelve people went to block the main driveway--an act of civil disobedience symbolizing our desire to block the business of DEATH carried on in the Pentagon. One person dumped a large bag of ashes (a symbol of the people--well over 100,000--reduced to ashes in a few minutes thirty-two years ago) across the front of the main entrance. He was arrested very quickly. At the same time, the blood-spillers dropped their signs to spill blood on their respective pillars. I was arrested before my

blood hit the pillar.

BLOOD, the most powerful symbol, I think, and a universal one, spilled on these Pillars of Death now to speak the Truth--to demand an end to the MADNESS of the REALITY of the constant threat of NUCLEAR WAR and GLOBAL DEATH.

I spill blood NOW to help us all to see the priority which Death has in our culture--we waste our limited human and ecological resources in the effort of WAR-MAKING while so many BASIC HUMAN NEEDS are neglected at home and abroad (the price of one Trident Submarine would do away with poverty in the whole state of Iowa).

I spill this blood NOW to remind myself and others that before the Bomb was ever made there was something in us that allowed it to exist and, therefore, we really need --each one of us--to deal with our own personal violence.

I spill this blood NOW so that when nuclear madness explodes again (whether in a Bomb or an Energy Plant) I, at least, will be able to say to the next generation that I did something.

All of us that were arrested were taken away, hand-cuffed and singing, in a yellow school bus. My feelings and thoughts at the time still require lots of reflection. I had replaced the person at the pillar one hour before the action so that I could become comfortable in the setting. I carried a baby bottle of my own blood in the front pocket of my bib-overalls over which I wore my green Iowa Lutheran Hospital Orderly shirt. I felt sure that everyone could spot the continued on p.6

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bottle a mile away and walked up the steps with a stiff right leg so that I wouldn't reveal it more than necessary. For the whole hour I felt that everyone was looking at my right leg--Paranoia??

However, from my pillar I did get a great over-view. Most of the demonstrators were across the street in front of me. Among them was a monk from Japan who, with five others, had been fasting and keeping vigil for ten days in front of the Pentagon. He was beating out a Peace Prayer on an oriental drum. It was very soothing and prayerful. And whenever he stopped, I had the feeling that the walls of the Pentagon were about to come down--Jericho!

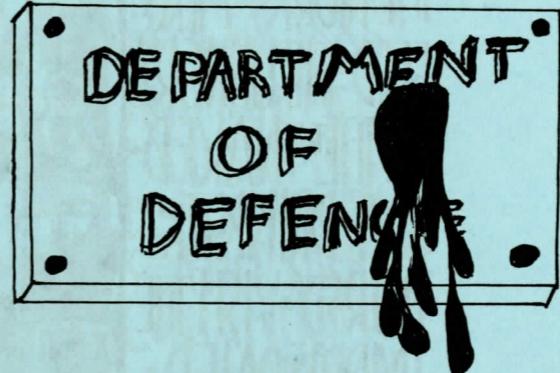
Lee Miller was standing at the pillar to my right. Between us was a policeman in full gear--helmet, gun, radio, etc., etc.. Lee asked him about wearing all that heavy gear in such warm weather, and for a while we chatted about the warm weather. I was so nervous I did not even realize it was hot! To my left was a group of plainclothes men. Every now and then one of them would stroll over for a "friendly" talk. Even the Head Man In Security dropped by--he did not even pretend to be friendly! All this time, I remember desperately trying to loosen the top of my bottle with my free hand (I was holding a sign with the other). But it was on too tightly and and every time I tried to open it one of the cops would come to talk. God! I was going up the wall--sure I'd NEVER get that bottle out of my pocket. Then

fate took over.

Coming out of the Pentagon was Mr. Amadeo, my eighth grade teacher at St. Anthony's. I couldn't believe it. I yelled out, "Amadeo!" He turned and looked -- his mouth wide open. "Frank Cordaro; eighth grade, St. Anthony's, Des Moines," I said. He couldn't believe it. He came over and we talked for about five minutes. The edge was taken off! Even the guards got a kick out of two people from Des Moines meeting like this. Irony! Life is filled with irony. Ironic that we should meet here.



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Ironic that he should quit teaching in a Catholic school because he couldn't live on the salary; so he joined the Air Force to make enough money, and hopes to return to coaching when he leaves the Pentagon. Ironic that my father was a coach at a Catholic school. Ironic that I love sports and had intended to be a coach . . . Ironic that I was at the Pentagon about to break the law of man by spilling the Blood of Life on the Temple of Death, and there meet Mr. Amadeo who now works in the Pentagon and coaches on the side when he can. He asked me if I knew what I was doing. I answered positively, "Yes, very much." Fate! God is good; my father asking from the grave, "Do you know what you are doing?" And I could say, "Yes!" Mr. Amadeo got into a car and drove away moments before the road was blocked.

The symbolic Rite of Exorcism was over. The road was blocked. The ashes were dumped. I dropped my sign, pulled the bottle out of my pocket and spilled the blood high

on the pillar. An officer grabbed me, pushed me against the wall, handcuffed me, frisked me, and took me and my companion blood-spillers and held us at the side of the main entrance between the wall and the pillars. The Police State took over! America's best riot squad appeared in all its strength--about fifty men --marching between us and the demonstrators. Police were all over the place, collecting ashes, baby bottles, and blood specimens for evidence. My blood was on the pillar, on me, and on my arresting officer. I told him I was sorry it got on him. He said, "That's o.k., it will wash out." We began to chant over and over, "The Pentagon is a Temple of Death."

It was so VIVID--so REAL--so UNREAL! The blood-spillers and the ash-dumpers were taken to where the road-blockers were waiting...Pictures were taken of each one with the arresting officer. We were loaded into the school bus. The riot squad was in position on the steps of the Pentagon. Other policemen were already hosing down the pillars and the steps with water. We were driven away, still chanting, The Pentagon is a "Temple of Death." Truly it was a well organized demonstration. Thanks to good planning and training on BOTH SIDES nobody lost their head.

This is all I can write now. This prison scene is another world--life can change completely as quickly as a door slams, or not change at all for years on end. I must remember that Time does not keep me-- I keep Time.

PRAY *

Frank

Statement to the Court:

I enter a plea for Iowa and my act of August 9 which was an act of Civil Disobedience. In theory, Civil Disobedience implies the legitimacy of the Court and the Law System within which it is practiced. At this time, I agree with this basic assumption.

In my case, it appears that I have broken a particular property law. I acted, not because of the injustice of this law, but because of the injustice which lies within the very property I violated--the Pentagon.

Property laws in our justice system protect all property, private and public, indiscriminately. In normal times, this seems to be for the good of a society and its individuals. However, these property laws break down, as any static law must, at their edge--their borderline cases. The Pentagon is just such a borderline case.

St. Thomas Aquinas in his writing on what constitutes "stealing" gives as an example the case of a person who takes a loaf of bread because he would starve without it. Aquinas states that such an act does not really constitute the act of "stealing" since in taking the bread the starving person is obeying a right higher than law--the inalienable right to life. Using this method of reasoning, I plead for my home state of Iowa in my act of Civil Disobedi-

ence.

I am too young to have experienced the historical events of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, I am unable to remember experientially the reality of all out war and the dropping of the Atom Bomb on these two Japanese cities. However, such past evils are never completely erased from present moments. The evils of war and violence are unforgettable realities that are repeated in every generation. But this repetition of History's evils is not a natural burden that human-beings and their societies MUST live with, but is an outgrowth of peoples' unlimited capacity to pretend to forget. This pretending to forget allows modern-day Hiroshimas and Nagasakis to exist right under our noses without us, as individuals, ever claiming them for what they are. This pretending

THE WORKS OF MERCY
FEED THE HUNGRY.
CLOTHE THE NAKED.
GIVE DRINK TO
THE THIRSTY.
VISIT THE
IMPRISONED.
CARE FOR
THE SICK.
BURY THE DEAD



THE WORKS OF WAR
DESTROY CROPS
AND LAND. SEIZE
FOOD SUPPLIES.
DESTROY HOMES.
SCATTER FAMILIES.
CONTAMINATE
WATER. IMPRISON
DISSENTERS. INFECT
WOUNDS. BURNS.
KILL THE LIVING

Rita Corbin

permits our many institutions, which profess to protect the individual and society from the nakedness of such evils, to blindly protect the uncontrolled powers and structures that daily implement the realities of new Hiroshimas and Nagasakis.

In my act of Civil Disobedience I plead for my home state of Iowa. I plead for the people who come to our Catholic Worker House daily because they have no housing, or clothing, or food. These people share our house out of their necessity and our privilege. These people, our friends who have suffered institutional violence of every kind, are broken persons living unprotected and naked to their own violence. I plead for my home state whose people, in a few short years if not before, will lose their most precious resource--

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'I plead for Iowa...'

LAND--either by loss of ownership, or of the freedom to decide how that land will be used. I plead for my family and friends who suffer so much spiritually because they live in a death wish society--the Pentagon, and all it represents, is the outward manifestation of this society--a death wish society that has been killing us spiritually as a people long before its nuclear bombs will kill us physically.

And, finally, I plead for the poor of Iowa knowing that the material and human resources wasted on ONE Trident Submarine could do away with all the poverty and unemployment in my home state.

In truth, my plea is a plea for LIFE and my act of spilling blood (yes, your honor, it was blood) on the pillars of the Pentagon was a life-affirming act. BLOOD, the symbol of life and death, spilled on the pillars of the Temple of Death to beckon the deadened consciences of my fellow citizens and their established institutions to take back the control of all life from this Beast of Death.

Surely no property is more valuable than life itself--and ALL life is at stake. Global life MUST be protected before the legitimacy of this unholy, illegitimate property called the Pentagon. All types of forums must be used to proclaim the Truth. As an individual citizen, I have used the action of spilling continued on p.10

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my blood as a forum to speak the Truth. The Court now has the obligation to speak the Truth, to recognize the Pentagon for what it is-- illegitimate property which has no right to exist since, in its idolatry



Robert McGovern

it threatens all life. If the Court were to speak out this morning on this Truth, all legitimate property laws would be obeyed and enforced as they have been in the past. And in this Court, at least, the Inalienable Right to Life would be affirmed before the rights of illegitimate property.

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food and shelter to all the needy people. It is true Jesus, he gave to me too, when my mom was at work. He does not care who you are, what nationality, caste, creed, or nothing of that sort. Remember Jesus, you also did the same thing when you were on the earth. You did good to everybody, loved everybody, you ate and lived with sinners, so the rich guys did not like your activities. So they caught you, put you in the jail and crucified you. But your Father from heaven might have sent angels to visit you in jail. But Jesus if it is true my Uncle Frank is not allowed visitors, can I go and visit him, Jesus? My mummy says that he is too far from here. I am too small Jesus to go alone. I am scared, will you come with me Jesus or will you go and visit him by yourself for my sake and tell him Bobby sent his love for him. You are capable of doing anything. I want to ask you one more thing. Please bless Uncle Frank and give him courage in everything. Let him love more the suffering humanity. Bless him Lord, so that he may be able to perform the apostolic work he has undertaken perfectly well. Thank you Jesus for having so much patience to read my letter and do not delay. Do something real quick.

With love,

Bobby

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thoughts on civil disobedience

Civil Disobedience is like any crime in that it is breaking a law which, ideally at least, is for the common good. It is also like other crimes in that it can run the gamut--it can be an act which is intrinsically harmless (such as spilling blood on the pillars of the Pentagon), or it can be an act which is as intrinsically serious (politically and morally) as assassination. These reflections deal only with the intrinsically harmless act--the symbolic act of non-violent Civil Disobedience.

One of the problems of the symbolic act of non-violent Civil Disobedience is that it is a sign of contradiction and a cause of division. One person may see the act as a prank. The problem then is relatively simple. How can a grown-up do such a silly thing? Another person may see the same act as malicious and treacherous.

The former sees the act but not its depth. The latter sees the depth of the act but misinterprets it. Many, if not all symbols, are open to misinterpretation. This, I think, is particularly true of symbolic actions.

An act of Civil Disobedience is a sign of contradiction because it looks like an act of hostility when in fact, if it is authentic, it is an act of love.

An act of Civil Disobedience is a cause of division because it is apparently an act against patriotism when in fact, if it is authen-

tic, it is true patriotism. This is so because patriotism, like all human values, must be subordinated to faith and to the Gospel in order to attain its true value and meaning.

The division does not exist only among those of us who are onlookers and must have an opinion about the wisdom, or prudence, or meaningfulness of the act. Indeed, some will see the act as good while others see it as evil. However, the most painful and decisive division must be experienced by the person doing the act of Civil Disobedience.

The love of God and the love of one's country are not mutually exclusive. And there is a deep desire in all of us to live our faith and our patriotism with integrity and without contradiction. Unfortunately, the human condition does not allow this. The person who participates, in faith, in the act of Civil Disobedience is one who sees the contradiction most clearly and feels the division most painfully. The prophets of the Old Testament are a prime example.

We must remember that Jesus himself is the sign of contradiction (Luke 2:34). He is the Prince of Peace who said about himself, "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). He is the one who always brings us face to face with the ultimate mystery of our lives. He is the one who makes each of us a sign of contradiction.

Eve Kavanagh, RSCJ



PRISONER 188-545 ON TRIAL

Our letters hadn't been reaching him, so it was on a whim that Joe and I decided to drive out to Frank's trial. We had been assured by veteran civil disobedience offenders that Frank would probably be released on time already served. So Joe and I were looking forward to being with him for the trial and then bringing him home with us.

Once there, Joe and I sat in the courtroom an hour early chatting with a group of priests who had come to support their "brothers in Christ" who were also on trial for civil disobedience at the Pentagon. In the midst of our getting to know one another, a group of uniformed officers and a few sleekly-groomed men (sex-appeal seems to be part of the image for "professional men" these days) pranced in and began buzzing among themselves. We all seated ourselves and Joe

and I began wringing our hands and looking anxiously at one another. The next thing I remember the third defendant was announced: "Frank Cardaro (sic), please."

Now I will not lead you to believe Judge Grimsley was a villain. I kept noticing his eyes, which reminded me of a "cornflower blue" crayon I had hoarded from the Box-of-64 as a child. He had a fatherly way of dealing with the 17 defendants and I half expected him after scolding Frank, to send him to bed without any supper. But remembering he was there to "uphold the law of the courts," he instead sentenced Frank to serve 20 more days.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel's portrait of the prophet is more than a little the story of any person touched by God and who tries to live what she or he hears:

"The prophet is a man who feels fiercely. God has thrust a burden upon his soul, and he is bowed and stunned at man's fierce greed. Frightful is the agony of man; no human voice can convey its full terror. Prophecy is the voice that God has lent to the silent agony, a voice to the plundered poor, to the profaned riches of the world. It is a form of living, a crossing point of God and man.

I was angry and disappointed to say the least, and I could feel hot tears come racing to my eyes. I pushed them away and tried to distract myself by looking out the window I was sitting next to. The window very picturesquely framed an old graveyard but my eyes focused on a tree near its edge. It had apparently been hit by a tornado, for its center was twisted so badly that its top hung toward the ground. . . I was suddenly struck with this symbolism: the graveyard--our past as an American people, how many mistakes we have buried to forget, how many lives we have taken in the interests of our greed and "security", and how we continue to prepare for death with the never-ending fashion show of B-1's, Tridents, BC111's

God is raging in the prophet's words.

"The prophets had disdain for those to whom God was comfort and security; to them God was a challenge, an incessant demand. He is compassion, but not a compromise; justice, but not inclemency. Tranquility is unknown to the soul of a prophet. The miseries of this world give him no rest. While others are callous, and even callous to their callousness and unaware of their insensitivity, the prophets remain examples of supreme impatience with evil, distracted by neither might nor applause. They feel fiercely because they hear deeply."

and neutron bombs. A society that lives with the kind of power our military has insured us of cannot help but be twisted as this tree was.

Yet there was an amazing thing about this tree. Though its middle was joining the top and bottom only by



Rita Corbin

cellulose threads, the branches continued to nourish a flowing crown of leaves here and there. Life was making a valiant statement for itself in spite of the deaths of its past, and its threatening death of the future. Just as the wood of Calvary bore death, it also bore life; and it is because of this that we dare to hope and witness that hope in our lives in the midst of overwhelming and ridiculous odds that the arms race sets before us. "Let me ask you one more question Mr. Cardaro (sic)," I was startled back to the trial by Judge Grimsley's voice. "Do you really think that what you did is going to make any continued on p.14

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difference at all to the military? Is it really going to change a thing?" The father was coming out in Grimsley again--concerned, but still missing the point. These 17 people were challenging with hope a situation that most have despaired changing. That each person must make visible that witness of Christ's hope in their lives should not be determined by whether or not it is effective against changing an evil system. But the importance being that a prophetic voice be heard against those principalities and powers that were not created for the glory

of God, but rather out of fear of placing our complete trust in Him.

I could see Judge Grimsley was intrigued by the strange actions of the people before him. And it made him uncomfortable. He kept fidgeting nervously in his chair like a little boy anxious to go out to recess. He was trying to ignore these

truths before him. But he couldn't escape being touched by the powerful witness each person presented in his court. I could see it in his cornflower blue eyes. And somehow, I couldn't escape thinking one of these days he would look out the window too.

--Jacquee Dickey

Good Health Tranquil Mind

From the beginning of man's recorded history, he has sought these ideals by many paths, religions, sciences and philosophies. Yet of all the disciplines, somehow combining the best of each, the most efficient is yoga. In the practice of yoga the results can be impressive. Power over the body and control of the mind are extended into everyday life. You will not only feel and think better, but other people will also notice your increased physical and mental poise. Yet to achieve this, no complicated knowledge is required, no complex apparatus is necessary, no special place need to be sought out. You need only yourself, a desire to improve your body and a will to discover the power of your mind.

Hatha yoga or physical exercises, Dhyana yoga or meditation, Pranayama yoga or breath control, yoga isometrics, dance therapy, diet control, etc., are taught by an accomplished yogini from India. For free demonstrations on September 18th at 7:00 p.m. call Catholic Council for Social Concern for further details, at 244-3761.

-- Theresa Palayam

Therefore, it must be said again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will eventually spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready.

The Church Today, Vatican II
Chapter 5, Section 1

CAN YOU WEATHER
THE STORM? YOU CAN IF YOU
HAVE GOD BESIDE YOU -
HE CAN LIFT YOU ABOVE
THE STORM,
WRITTEN BY VELMA LEJA FEB-22

We ask your prayers for Velma Leja, a guest who spent four months of the last year of her life with us.

The news of her death on Friday morning came as a surprise to us.

In the time she spent with us, we learned very little about her. She had spent some time in jail. She was married and divorced. She had a nephew in Moline. On her trips from Des Moines, she visited Omaha and Denver. That's all she told us about herself.

She wasn't always pleasant to live with. She frequently barked at people, and often felt we were cruel to her, but she always came back.

She was plagued with frostbitten feet, and hemorrhoids, which sometimes caused her to speak more harshly than the kindly woman who laughed quietly and gave her small gifts so generously.

Her secrecy lasted til the end. The staff at St. Joseph's Hospital in Omaha could not get any information from her on her admission late in August. They found Helen's address and phone number in her purse. Velma wouldn't let any friends know she was dying.

Her leaving, an important event for us, is as temporary as her departure for Denver before Christmas. "I don't like goodbyes," she said. "We'll meet again."

--Joe Da Via

PENANCE
A Meditation
by
Dorothy Day

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I could not help thinking how little penance we have done these last years, how little mortification, how little dying to self, which is what mortification is. To mortify is to put to death, to do violence to oneself.

"You have not yet resisted unto death." St. Paul said. "Without the shedding of blood there is no salvation." Blood means LIFE in Biblical terms.

Some years ago I saw a man die of a heart attack before my eyes, and his skin became like wax as the blood stopped moving in the veins and seemed to drain back to the heart.

If our cause is a mighty one, and surely peace on earth in these days is the great issue of the day, and if we are opposing the powers of darkness, of nothingness, of destruction, and working on the side of life and light, then surely we must use our greatest weapons--the life forces that are in each one of us.

To stand on the side of life we must give up our own lives.

"HE WHO WOULD SAVE HIS LIFE MUST LOSE IT."

September, 1965

